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DEPARTMENT FOR G/IWI FOR ORNA BLUM

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SUBJECT: EMBASSY JAKARTA'S NOMINATIONS FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S
AWARD FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN OF COURAGE

¶1. (U) Embassy Jakarta is pleased to nominate two outstanding candidates for the Secretary of State's Award for International Women of Courage. Our two candidates are:

--Suciwati Munir, widow of prominent human rights worker Munir Thalib and a courageous human rights activist who has turned her husband's murder case into something much bigger: a campaign to transform Indonesia itself.

--Siti Musdah Mulia, an active and influential Muslim activist who has tirelessly campaigned for women's rights in Indonesia.

While we have a slight preference for Siti Musdah Mulia, both are outstanding and courageous activists who have endured threats to their safety and have persevered in their struggle for a just Indonesia. We defer to the Office of the Senior Coordinator for International Women's Issues (G/IWI) to choose the candidate who best fits the Secretary's criteria for this award.

¶2. (U) Detailed Nominations for both candidates follow below.

¶3. (U) Post is pleased to nominate Suciwati Munir for the Secretary's Award for International Women of Courage. Suciwati is

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the widow of Munir Thalib, one of Indonesia's leading human rights activists who was poisoned on a Garuda Airlines flight in 2004. Suciwati was born in Malang, East Java and was an experienced labor activist when she met and married Munir, at the time a young human rights lawyer. She was Munir's strongest supporter in his battle for human rights. Soon after Munir's death, Suciwati became convinced that senior Indonesian intelligence officials probably orchestrated the gruesome killing, and that the Government was trying to cover-up the involvement of these powerful officials.

¶4. (U) Since then, Suciwati has conducted a relentless campaign to force Indonesian authorities to find and convict the perpetrators of this terrible murder. For Suciwati, this fight goes far beyond seeking justice for her dead husband: it is about confronting and defeating the culture of impunity that remains embedded in Indonesia.; it is about upholding the principle that every citizen is accountable under the law, regardless of power or position; it is about forcing Indonesia's leaders to honor their promise to respect human rights.

¶5. (U) In her long and often lonely battle for justice, Suciwati has lobbied domestic and international leaders (including several Senators and Congressmen), engaged NGOs, written articles and editorials, appeared on television, staged protests and rallies, and conducted letter writing campaigns. In addition, Suciwati founded and heads the Solidarity Network of the Families of Victims of Violence, an organization dedicated to families of victims whose cases have yet to be solved or taken seriously by the authorities. In all her activities she has repeatedly emphasized her messages about justice and transparency. In waging this campaign, Suciwati put herself and her two young children at great risk. She and her

family have received numerous death threats warning her to relinquish her quest, all of which she has ignored, saying "we (have) chosen to live as human rights activists. If you fear, it should be for other people, not yourself, if not it only gets in the way of your intelligence and rationale."

¶16. (U) In 2005, Suciwati's efforts led the Indonesian government to form an official fact finding team into the Munir case. Unfortunately, the team's mandate ended in June, 2005 and its results were not made public. Shortly thereafter, authorities arrested and charged Pollycarpus Priyanto, an off-duty Garuda Airlines employee with killing Munir under orders from Indonesian intelligence. In 2006, Suciwati faced a terrible setback when an Indonesian court acquitted Pollycarpus of all charges. Rather than yield, Suciwati reinvigorated her campaign and traveled to the U.S. to meet American leaders, placing an international spotlight on Indonesia's deeply flawed effort to find and convict Munir's killers. Her U.S. trip included a briefing to the Congressional Human Rights Caucus and meetings with the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions. As a result, President Yudhoyono instructed the police and attorney general's office to re-open the Munir murder investigation.

¶17. (U) Indonesian and international human rights activists admire Suciwati for her enormous fortitude in the face of tragedy. In 2006, the American NGO Human Rights First presented Munir (posthumously) and Suciwati its 2006 Human Rights Award for their unwavering commitment to human rights. However, these human rights activists reserve their highest praise for Suciwati's success in turning her husband's case into a litmus test of Indonesia's ability, under President Yudhoyono, to face its sometimes gruesome past human rights record and establish a credible judicial system. Human rights activists say that Suciwati could have focused her effort solely on the Munir case; no one would have faulted her for that. Rather, she turned this case into something much bigger: a crusade to transform Indonesia itself. In addition, Suciwati has

demonstrated to Indonesians the power of one person to effect change and challenge the government. As a result, we believe Suciwati richly deserves the Secretary's Award for International Women of Courage.

¶18. (U) Following is more information about the nominee:

Name: Ms. Suciwati Munir

Date of Birth: March 28, 1968

Contact Information: Ms. Suciwati Munir

Perumahan Jaka Mulya, Jalan Pelangi E No. 12, Bekasi Selatan 17146

Telephone: (62) 818 159 146

Embassy point of contact: Sanjay Ramesh, Political Officer,
Political Section, phone (62-21) 3435-97078, fax (62-21) 3435-9916,
email: RameshS@state.gov

¶19. (U) Post is pleased to nominate Dr. Siti Musdah Mulia, for the Secretary of State's award for International Women of Courage. Dr.

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Mulia is a multi-talented individual who is active in many areas. She is a professor of Islamic Political Thought, a chief researcher and senior advisor at the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, and a Muslim activist. Born in Bone, South Sulawesi, she is the author of numerous books, including the recently published "Reformist Muslimah," and hundreds of articles and research reports. She is the first woman to obtain a PhD in the field of Islamic Political Thought from the State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta (1997), and she was also the first woman to be appointed as a Research Professor by the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (1999). A prominent Muslim feminist, Dr. Mulia has used her extensive knowledge of the Quran and Hadiths to advocate for women's rights in Indonesia.

¶10. (U) For the past two years, Dr. Mulia has been widely condemned by conservative Muslim groups and has received numerous death threats from radical Islamic groups. At the end of 2004, Dr. Mulia and a team of 11 experts completed a groundbreaking project, the

Counter Legal Draft (CLD), which is a revised draft of Indonesia's Islamic legal code. The revised version recommends banning polygamy and allowing inter-faith marriages. Dr. Mulia proposed that the revised version be immediately considered and ratified by the parliament. The revised version of the CLD addresses misinterpretations of several issues, particularly those related to marriage. In response to disagreements and violent protests against the CLD, the Minister of Religious Affairs canceled the project, reporting that it had made the Muslim community "restless."

¶11. (U) Post justification: Though faced with death threats and condemnation, Dr. Mulia is one of the most active and influential Muslim women activists in Indonesia. Her interests include religion, education, Islamic law, democracy, religious tolerance, and women's issues. In addition to being a prolific author and a respected scholar, she is the chairperson of Muslimat Nahdlatul Ullama (Muslimat NU), focusing on women's issues and education. Muslimat NU is the largest Islamic social organization in Indonesia, with over 40 million members. Deeply committed to education, Dr. Mulia continues to lecture at the State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah in Jakarta. She is also an active public speaker and media personality. Her scholarly research is well-respected, and she is a sought-after expert by her peers.

¶12. (U) Countering the Minister of Religious Affairs, the National Commission on Violence against Women indicated that the majority of Muslim women believe that the draft embraced progressive thought and placed women in a more powerful position in marriage. The Commission further posited that the rejection of the draft "denied citizen rights (to hold different) opinions and the public's right to discuss new ideas," and said the rejection represented a "stifling of this discussion, directly putting women at a disadvantage." Until now, the CDL remains cancelled, ostensibly for the purpose of maintaining public order.

¶13. (U) Dr. Mulia continues to educate Indonesian women about their rights, particularly those concerning marriage and personal status. She argues that marriage is the right of every individual and that the CLD would not allow violent, exploitive or forced marriage. Moreover, the CLD would prohibit child marriage, mutah marriage, contractual marriage, and polygamy. In addition, under the CLD, every marriage would be required to be registered.

¶14. (U) A tireless advocate for women's rights in Indonesia, Dr. Mulia perseveres in the face of personal risk and danger. She firmly believes that the CLD would strengthen women's rights and personal status. It is her hope that if the government supports the principles of democracy in Indonesia, it will not ignore or attempt to silence the voices of women and deny their rights.

¶15. (U) The following is a list of selected publications focusing on women issues:

"Reformed Muslim Women," Mizan, 2005 (Muslimah Reformis, Perempuan Pembaharu Keagamaan)

"Women and Politics," Gramedia, 2005 co-authored with Anik Farida

(Wanita dan Politik)

"Islam is Against Poligamy," Gramedia, 2004 (Islam Menggugat Poligami)

"Portrayal of Women in Islamic Lectures," the Ministry of Religious Affairs in 1999 (Potret Perempuan dalam Lektur Islam)

"Guidance of Women Preachers," KP-MDI, 2000 (Pedoman Dakwah Muballighat)

"Gender Equality and Justice in Islam," LKAJ, 1998 (Kesetaraan dan Keadilan Gender dalam Perspektif Islam)

¶16. (U) Following is more information about the nominee:

Name: Ms. Siti Musdah Mulia

Date of Birth: March 3, 1959

Contact information: Dr. Siti Musdah Mulia, MA.

State Minister's Expert Staff for Religious Organization Development

Ministry of Religious Affairs

Phone: (62-21) 380-0209, 381-1679 X 218

Cellular: (62) 816-138-1341

Fax: (62-21) 3811436

E-mail: m-mulia@indo.net.id

Embassy point of contact: Scott Bolz, Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer, Public Affairs Section, phone (62-21) 3435-9522, fax (62-21) 3435-9949, email: bolzs@state.gov